

Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC)

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 3, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Peter Jessop, Chair, in the Town Room at Town Hall

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Sandra Anderson, Marilyn Blaustein, Paris Boice, Lynda Faye, Peter Jessop, Chair; Ellen Kosmer, Mary Streeter, Vice Chair; Stan Ziomek

STAFF / OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Sonia Aldrich, Jim Oldham, Diana Stein, Select Board liaison

DISCUSSION

Financials:

Peter Jessop, Chair, reviewed the available funding for projects this year.

Proposals:

The CPAC went through proposals and generated questions to ask the proposers to address during their presentations.

1. Amherst Housing Authority. \$160,625. Kitchen renovations for 25 units and electrical work for 80 units at Ann Whalen Apartments.

Questions:

- Could the items be separate if only a certain amount of funding is available? (e.g., electrical and kitchen)
- Could you accept partial funding?
- Could it be done in two phases?
- Can you prioritize the items if you only receive part of the funding?
- Is it a prevailing wage job?
- Where did the cost estimates come from?
- *The CPAC has received far more requests for funds than available funds this year. Would your proposed project still go forward if you received partial funding?*

* Mary Streeter suggests informing the applicants that we have received many proposals this year for large amounts of money, greatly exceeding the funds we have available.

2. Amherst Historical Society. \$18,901. Conservation of Emily Dickinson's Dress including archival storing of the dress.

Questions:

Part I

- How do we insure that the dress stays here and does not get sold?
- Would there be a restriction that the dress remains in Amherst with no intention of selling?
- How do we make sure that this benefits the community?/What is the big picture contribution to the community?
- Where did the estimate come from, was it a general estimate or specific to this dress?
- Where is the dress located now and where will it be located once restored?
- Can you do anything with less money?/ Is this an all or nothing project?
- *The CPAC has received far more requests for funds than available funds this year. Would your proposed project still go forward if you received partial funding?*

Part II

- Can you do anything with less money?/ Is this an all or nothing project?
- How did you figure out the estimates?
- Do they sell anything from the Strong house?
- Do they lend out artifacts?
- What restrictions are placed on the items?
- How do we make sure that this benefits the community?
- Would you/could you bid the work out to lower the cost, instead of charging 70\$ per hour for a consultant?
- *The CPAC has received far more requests for funds than available funds this year. Would your proposed project still go forward if you received partial funding?*

3. Community Field Master Plan. \$40,000. LSSE is requesting funds for a consultant to complete a programmatic master plan for Community Field. According to Ziomek, a full evaluation of the use of the field and how it could be used most effectively is needed. The process would involve public outreach.

Questions:

- What evidence is there for increased use of Community Field?
- Will there be another request to implement improvements or changes to Community Field?
- Does the school system have any responsibility or have they been approached for additional funding?
- How does the money required for this project compare to other projects of its size?
- Does it really require an outside consultant? Could it be part of the professional duties of LSSE staff, school staff or other town staff?
- How has LSSE been interfacing with the town and school to address this issue?
- If you had less money would you complete a portion of this project?

- *The CPAC has received far more requests for funds than available funds this year. Would your proposed project still go forward if you received partial funding?*

*Sandy Anderson made the point that given the fact that we have over one million in requests and less than half a million in available funds, we should ask all applicants if they could you complete your project with 25% of funds, 50%, 75%..., etc.

4. South Amherst Conservation Assoc. (SAC) \$140-150,000 (an additional \$50,000 is being requested by the Conservation Commission --see #11 650-652 Southeast St.) for purchase of the old Rock Farm on South East Street. There will be a public auction of the property on December 17, 2012. Much of the property would be preserved for conservation and recreation. Carol Gray presented on behalf of the association. \$21,000 in pledges has been received, and the hope is that CPA funds will leverage additional funds. Conservation and Development will be requesting funds as well. Public Auction. Ziomek is talking with Kestrel Trust, South Amherst Conservation Assoc. The Dept. of Conservation and Recreation was at the last meeting and will be requesting \$100,000. SAC has \$21,000 in pledges. Kestrel may be able to apply for partnership fund grants.

Questions:

- How does it fit in with Conservation Commission/Dept. of Conservation plan for conservation of property?
 - What other funding sources are in place to leverage the funding?/ What other sources of funding are available?
 - Will the Conservation Commission have to vote on funding?
 - Can you provide maps, pictures, and history of the site?
 - What is the Conservation Commission's position on this? And where is town staff on this?
 - *The CPAC has received far more requests for funds than available funds this year. Would your proposed project still go forward if you received partial funding?*
5. Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity. \$80,000 for two houses on site of Hawthorne Farm. Proposal is premature and in anticipation of an RFP being issued, and that Habitat is selected as the developer. An RFP is likely to go out early in 2013.

Questions:

- RFP is not out yet, so this proposal is a bit premature.
- They do not necessarily need to come out and present, they should spend their time getting town staff to move forward on this project.

- *The CPAC has received far more requests for funds than available funds this year. Would your proposed project still go forward if you received partial funding?*
6. LSSE. Mill River Recreation Area Improvement \$60,000. Amendments to the CPA act enacted in summer 2012 now allow for capital improvements for recreational facilities. Improvements include shade structures, lifeguard chairs, fencing and repairs to the water line.

Questions:

- What are the itemized estimates? Need more detail about the cost.
 - What other sources are you looking at?
 - Can you prioritize the list of improvements?
 - Can LSSE rank all of their requests?
 - *The CPAC has received far more requests for funds than available funds this year. Would your proposed project still go forward if you received partial funding?*
7. Conservation and Development. North Common \$158,000. According to Ziomek, funds requested would cover design/ build and 30% of the \$530,000 cost to be resubmitted as a PARC grant in summer 013. The Historical Commission voted to support. The process will be led by the Historical Commission with support from LSSE, DPW and other entities with interest in the North Common. The process would include building of charrettes with public input over the winter. \$15,000 would get design project and bid specifications. Will need to clarify the role of a consultant. Other funding sources from the BID, Chamber of Commerce, etc. will need to be identified.

Questions:

- Can you provide a thorough update on this project and why it should be done this spring?
- Are you implementing any part of Olmstead's plan?
- *The CPAC has received far more requests for funds than available funds this year. Would your proposed project still go forward if you received partial funding?*

*Historical Commission is holding a public meeting later this month to bring this project to the public's attention and get information on how the public wants to use and preserve the area.

*Hist. Commission ranked it number 3 out of their current list of proposals.

*CPAC voted to recommend to Town Meeting to approve the North Common project in fall 2012 and Town Meeting approved it.

8. Tiffany Window Restoration Unitarian Universalist Society. \$106,250 Historic Preservation. Funds are being requested for the restoration and preservation of the Angel of the Lilies Tiffany window at the UU Society. Faye presented on behalf of the Historical Commission, which has not yet voted on the proposal. The requestors met with the Historical Commission. More information on the window and its relationship to the building is needed and how a preservation restriction would impact future plans for the building—there can be no changes to the exterior once CPA funds are granted.

Questions:

- Are you clear on the historic preservation restriction?
- What is the proposed timing of this project, relative to any work being done on the building currently/in the near future?
- Please address the issue of the three La Farge windows on the rear of the building.
- *The CPAC has received far more requests for funds than available funds this year. Would your proposed project still go forward if you received partial funding?*

9. Amherst Media. Archive Town's Historic Recordings \$53,994. Funds would cover purchase of computers and other equipment, and payroll for hourly employees to digitize historical tapes.

Questions:

- Can any of the hardware be outsourced?
- Are one-time materials a good use of funding?
- How would taxpayers benefit?
- Would there be restrictions on materials?
- Where would the recordings be housed?
- Did you look at outsourcing and how much would it cost to do so?
- What are some of the documents you have that you want to preserve? A sample list may be helpful.
- Will the hardware that you are proposing to acquire be used for other projects other than the one proposed?
- *The CPAC has received far more requests for funds than available funds this year. Would your proposed project still go forward if you received partial funding?*

10. Jones Library \$14,000 for repair of slate roof. The Library already has historic preservation restriction.

Questions:

- Is this best being done piecemeal?
- Are there other funding sources?
- What's left over from the Chimney repair project previously funded with CPA funds?
- Where did you get your pricing/estimates for work?
- *The CPAC has received far more requests for funds than available funds this year. Would your proposed project still go forward if you received partial funding?*

11. Conservation and Development: 1) \$25,000 for surveys and appraisals, According to Ziomek, appraisals run from \$4,000-\$7,000. There is presently a balance in the fund for appraisals, and Ziomek will update CPAC with the amount and whether the \$25,000 request can be scaled back. There is a backlog of projects to be appraised, and negotiations are uncertain. Ziomek will provide info as it becomes available. 2) \$50,000 650-652 South East Street. Additional funds to conserve this property. A coalition of conservation groups including South Amherst Conservation Association, Kestrel Land Trust and the Department of Conservation and Recreation has been meeting to consider strategies to conserve this land. 3) 163,000 Brunelle-Phase II (Potwine Lane). Funds would support the second phase of a project to protect 26 acres of land on Potwine Lane, which is adjacent to the Plum Brook Conservation Area. If Phase I of the project is funded, Ziomek may recommend that Phase 2 be deferred for a year.

Questions:

- Please provide an update on the request for funds for appraisals.
- Do you need the whole amount for appraisals, etc.?
- Please prioritize your requests.
- Pertaining to the Brunelle property- Why would you resubmit this project?/ Why would it be successful the second time around?
- Timeline for the Brunelle project? Is it off the table for this Calendar year?
- Please provide more details on the North Amherst farm land.
- *The CPAC has received far more requests for funds than available funds this year. Would your proposed project still go forward if you received partial funding?*

*Paris will edit and separate the questions so that Sonia can send them out to specific presenters.

Schedule presentations:

Jan. 31- Historic

Feb. 7- Open Space, Recreation and Affordable Housing

Presenters, members of various commissions and others should attend the CPAC meeting on those evenings.

Sonia will schedule presenters at 20 minute intervals starting at 7:00pm

Scheduling future meetings:

Peter will be out of town Feb. 14th, so that meeting will be moved to Feb. 7th.

We will decide on Feb. 28th to see if we need to meet again before the March 28th meeting.

Sandy will miss the presentations so Mary will email her the MP3 of the presentations and she will email any comments or questions to Sonia.

Discuss creating a policy on timeline for spending capital funds:

In the proposal application we already ask presenters to describe the timeline in which they will spend funds. Some members want to make sure monies are used within the end of the fiscal year. Others think that is too restrictive, and think maybe a year and a half or two years would work better.

Committee members want to know about projects that have been awarded in the past that have still not used funds. Linda makes the point that Historic has projects from 2006 that have still not been completed because of staffing issues. They are reliant on Town Staff and staff has been depleted over the years. Ellen thinks that if we put a time restriction on funding it will motivate the town to act on projects.

*Under what circumstances should the money come back to the CPA fund?

*Have other towns dealt with this issue and what have they done?

We would like to have a status report from each awarded project every year. When our proposal form goes out, we would ask applicants to provide a status report. No action will be taken until we receive a status report. Status report should say what has been accomplished to date.

Lynda reaffirms that this is just a discussion, and Peter confirms. We will continue this discussion over the course of the next few meetings, and get more information from the coalition.

Mary will send an email to Stuart Saginor and see if other towns have dealt with this same issue. She will also ask him what statutory standing we have to implement any of the above ideas.

Marilyn Blaustein moved to approve the minutes of Sept. 27th, 2012. Paris Boice seconded. Voted unanimously. Sandy Anderson and Ellen Kosmer abstained.

Lynda Faye moved to approve the minutes of Dec. 6th, 2012. Mary Streeter seconded. Voted unanimously. Paris Boice abstained.

Adjournment: Marilyn Blaustein moved to adjourn the meeting at _____pm. Sandy Anderson seconded. Voted unanimously. Stan Ziomek absent.

NEXT MEETINGS

Next meeting: January 31, 2013

All future meetings will be in the Town Room at Town Hall from 7 pm to 9 pm unless otherwise indicated below:

January 31, 2013

February 7, 2013

February 28, 2013

March 28, 2013

Town Meeting begins May 6, 2013.

DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED

- Agenda, 1 page
- Financial Status for CPAC Funds
- Minutes from December 6th, 2012
- Memo from Historical Commission Re: FY2014 CPA Historical Preservation Project Proposals
- Memo from Housing and Sheltering Committee Re: FY2014 CPA Affordable Housing Project Proposals

Respectfully submitted by Paris Boice, acting clerk

Approved January 31, 2013

